2024 ECONOMIC REPORT
SOUTHEAST
REGION

DEPARTMENT OF
HIGHER EDUCATION &
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The Southeast Region is comprised of 13 counties in the southeast portion of Missouri. The region is home to several cities, including Cape Girardeau, Sikeston, Caruthersville, and Park Hills.

The Southeast Region workforce had more than 156,500 employees in 2023, making up 5.2 percent of Missouri's employment. In 2023, 52.2 percent of the workforce was female, and 47.8 percent was male, while the Missouri average was 50.7 percent females and 49.3 percent male workers in the workforce. The regional average unemployment rate in 2023 was 3.4 percent, compared to 3.0 percent for Missouri and 3.6 percent for the nation.

The workforce is getting older in the Southeast Region, a trend continuing throughout Missouri and the U.S. In 2023, 24.1 percent of the workforce was age 55 or older, up from 20 percent a decade earlier. It was 23.6 percent for Missouri and 24.0 percent for the nation.

For the region, 11.1 percent of the workforce was non-white and 2.7 percent was Hispanic or Latino. This compares to the state averages of 17.5 percent non-white and 4.8 percent Hispanic or Latino.

In the Southeast Region, 3.1 percent of the region's population (ages 18 to 64) speaks a language other than English at home. By comparison, Missouri was at 7.0 percent and the U.S. was at 23.5 percent.

The Southeast Region has a higher percentage of the population with a disability compared to the state and the nation. For the Southeast Region, 17.0 percent of the population has a disability compared to 12.3 percent in Missouri and 10.5 percent in the U.S.
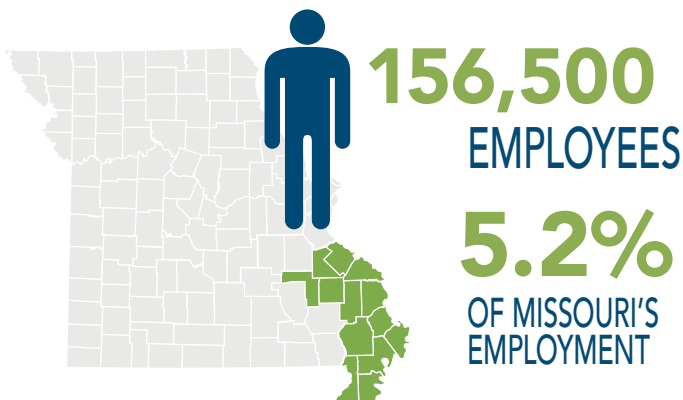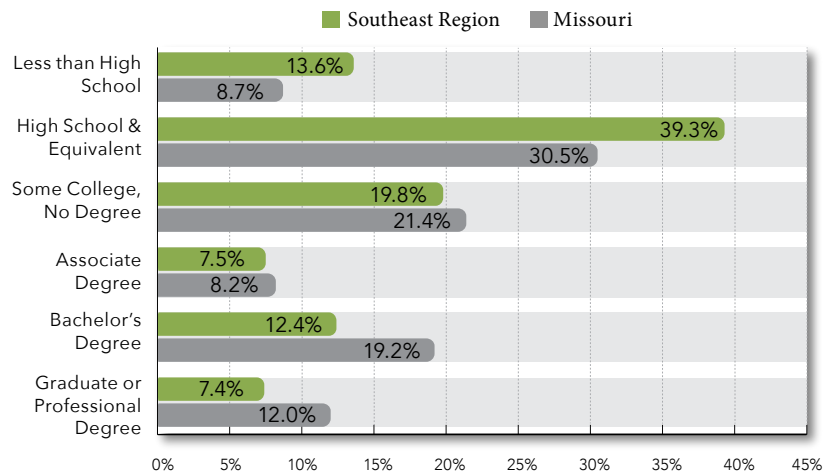
Workforce Demographics

	Southeast Region	Missouri	United States
Average Monthly Employment in 2023	156,529	2,993,587	161,037,000
Average Unemployment Rate in 2023	3.4%	3.0%	3.6%
Male	47.8%	49.3%	51.3%
Female	52.2%	50.7%	48.7%
Non-White	11.1%	17.5%	24.6%
Hispanic or Latino	2.7%	4.8%	17.7%
Ages 55 and Older	24.1%	23.6%	24.0%
With Disabilities (Ages 18-64)	17.0%	12.3%	10.5%
Below Poverty Levels (Ages 18-64)	16.3%	12.3%	11.7%
Language other than English (Ages 18-64)	3.1%	7.0%	23.5%
Education of Associate Degree or Higher (25 years & Older)	27.3%	39.4%	43.1%
Veterans (Age 18-64)	4.3%	4.7%	4.3%

SOURCES: QWI 2023 Q2; PRIVATE OWNERSHIP. CENSUS 2022 ACS 5 YEARS DATA, LAUS 2023 DATA

Educational attainment rates for the Southeast Region are lower than those of the state for bachelor's or advanced degrees. Twenty-seven percent of the region's population age 25 and older has an associate, bachelor's, or advanced degree compared to 39 percent for the state, and 43 percent for the nation. About 13.6 percent of the region's population of age 25 and older had less than high school education.

Educational Attainment

Legend: Southeast Region, Missouri

	Southeast Region	Missouri
Less than High School	13.6%	8.7%
High School & Equivalent	39.3%	30.5%
Some College, No Degree	19.8%	21.4%
Associate Degree	7.5%	8.2%
Bachelor's Degree	12.4%	19.2%
Graduate or Professional Degree	7.4%	12.0%

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, ACS 2022, 5 YEAR ESTIMATES

156,500 EMPLOYEES

5.2% OF MISSOURI'S EMPLOYMENT

SOUTHEAST REGION

INDUSTRY ANALYSIS

The Southeast Region averaged over 134,500 jobs in 2023. The region lost 4,125 jobs from 2019 to 2023, but employment increased 1.0 percent from 2022 to 2023. Missouri employment increased by 1.9 percent in 2023. From 2019 to 2023, the Southeast Region averaged a decrease of 0.6 percent compounded annually for an overall decrease of 3.0 percent. During that same period (2019-2023), Missouri's compound annual employment gain was 0.5 percent for an overall gain of 2.4 percent.

Southeast Region Employment Annual Growth Rate
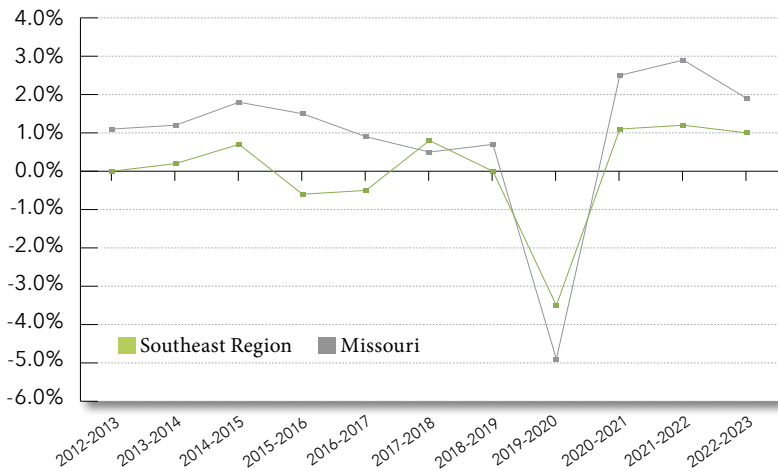
SOURCE: BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, QCEW

Health Care and Social Assistance was the largest employing industry in the region in 2023, even though it lost 2,381 in employment in 2023 when compared to 2019. *Manufacturing* was the second largest industry, followed by *Retail Trade* and *Accommodation and Food Services*.

Several industry sectors in the Southeast Region lost employment between 2019 and 2023, except *Retail Trade; Accommodation and Food Services; Transportation and Warehousing; Finance and Insurance;* and *Wholesale Trade.*

Southeast Region Top Employing Industries

	Employment 2019	Employment 2023	Net Change	2019-2023 CAGR	2022 Annual Wages
Health Care and Social Assistance	31,778	29,397	-2,381	-1.5%	$41,688
Manufacturing	18,693	17,526	-1,167	-1.3%	$60,096
Retail Trade	15,777	17,260	1,483	1.8%	$36,252
Accommodation and Food Services	11,094	11,401	307	0.5%	$20,700
Educational Services	11,028	10,516	-512	-0.9%	$37,548
Construction	6,689	6,580	-109	-0.3%	$57,432
Public Administration	6,923	6,185	-738	-2.2%	$40,260
Wholesale Trade	5,776	5,882	106	0.4%	$73,704
Transportation and Warehousing	5,120	5,261	141	0.5%	$55,668
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	4,916	4,061	-855	-3.7%	$47,232
Finance and Insurance	3,840	3,907	67	0.3%	$63,192
Other Services (except Public Administration)	3,035	3,262	227	1.5%	$37,656

SOURCES: LEHD QWI, 2019-2023 QUARTER 3 DATA, LEHD QWI 2022 ANNUAL AVERAGE FOR WAGE. ALL OWNERSHIP

LOCATION QUOTIENT

To understand the major industries within a region, an analysis of industry concentration or clustering can be useful. The Location Quotient (LQ) describes the concentration of an industry in a geographic region, in relation to the nation, with 1.0 being the national average. Industries with higher than 1.0 LQ indicate a concentration.

The Southeast Region had higher concentrations in *Gasoline Stations and Fuel Dealers; Mining (except Oil and Gas); Crop Production; Wood Product Manufacturing; Social Assistance; Truck Transportation;* and *Nursing and Residential Care Facilities.*

HIGHEST 2023
LQ 3.1
GASOLINE STATIONS AND FUEL DEALERS

2023 Southeast Region Location Quotients

Industry	Employment	Location Quotient
Gasoline Stations and Fuel Dealers	2,984	3.1
Mining (except Oil and Gas)	531	3.1
Crop Production	1,146	2.3
Wood Product Manufacturing	860	2.3
Social Assistance	8,840	2.2
Truck Transportation	2,767	2.0
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	5,437	1.9
Support Activities for Agriculture and Forestry	546	1.6
General Merchandise Retailers	4,475	1.5
Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers	1,770	1.4
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	2,537	1.4
Health and Personal Care Retailers	1,340	1.3
Goods-Producing	27,126	1.3
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Musical Instrument, Book, and Miscellaneous Retailers	1,577	1.1
Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	427	1.1

SOURCE: U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, QUARTERLY CENSUS OF EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES, 2023

SOUTHEAST REGION

Projected growth in industry helps to identify future employment needs for an area. Projections indicate that the largest industry growth in the Southeast Region from 2022-2032 will be in the *Hospitals; Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing; Management of Companies and Enterprises; General Merchandise Retailers;* and *Construction of Buildings.*

Southeast Region Largest Growth Industries 2022-2032

	Employment 2022	Employment 2032	Change 2022-2032 Numeric	Change 2022-2032 Percent
Hospitals	8,412	9,270	**858**	10.2%
Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	1,529	2,106	**577**	37.7%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1,014	1,386	**372**	36.7%
General Merchandise Retailers	4,490	4,854	**364**	8.1%
Construction of Buildings	1,529	1,843	**314**	20.5%
Real Estate	1,021	1,304	**283**	27.7%
Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	1,040	1,320	**280**	26.9%
Repair and Maintenance	1,289	1,566	**277**	21.5%
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	5,613	5,832	**219**	3.9%
Machinery Manufacturing	730	893	**163**	22.3%

SOURCE: MERIC INDUSTRY PROJECTIONS, 2022-2032
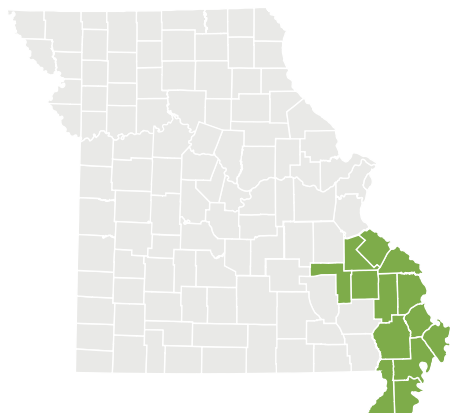
PROJECTED GROWTH BY INDUSTRY HELPS TO IDENTIFY FUTURE EMPLOYMENT NEEDS FOR AN AREA.

OCUPATIONS PROJECTIONS

MERIC produces occupational projections that estimates labor demand over a 10-year period. The current projections cycle projected industry and occupation employment from 2022-2032. MERIC categorizes these occupations using its Now-Next-Later method to help job seekers understand the training, education, and experience requirements for various occupations.

NOW jobs typically require short-term on-the-job training, little to no experience, and/or a high school diploma. **Now** occupations with the most projected openings are *Home Health and Personal Care Aides; Cashiers;* and *Stockers and Order Fillers. Amusement and Recreation Attendants; Home Health and Personal Care Aides;* and *Receptionists and Information Clerks* are projected to be the fastest growing Now occupations over the next decade.

NEXT jobs typically require a non-degree certificate, associate degree, apprenticeship, some experience, or moderate- to long-term training. *Nursing Assistants; Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers;* and *Cooks, Restaurant* are projected to have the most openings for the **Next** category of occupations. *Cabinetmakers and Bench Carpenters; Cutting, Punching, and Press Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic;* and *Medical Assistants* are the fastest growing Next occupations.

LATER jobs typically require a bachelor's degree or higher. For **Later** occupations, *General and Operations Managers; Registered Nurses;* and *Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education* are projected to have the most openings. *Registered Nurses; Human Resources Specialists;* and *Accountants and Auditors* are the fastest growing Later occupations.

Southeast Region Fastest Growing Occupations

NOW
- *Amusement and Recreation Attendants*
- *Home Health and Personal Care Aides* ★
- *Receptionists and Information Clerks*
- *Light Truck Drivers*
- *Customer Service Representatives*

NEXT
- *Cabinetmakers and Bench Carpenters*
- *Cutting, Punching, and Press Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic*
- *Medical Assistants*
- *Carpenters*
- *Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants*

LATER
- *Registered Nurses* ★
- *Human Resources Specialists*
- *Accountants and Auditors*
- *General and Operations Managers* ★
- *Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education*

SOURCE: MERIC OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS, 2022-2032

NOTE: OCCUPATIONS WITH ANNUAL TOTAL OPENINGS OF LESS THAN 50 ARE OMITTED

★ *DENOTES OCCUPATIONS IN THE TOP TEN ONLINE JOB ADS FOR MAY 2023- APRIL 2024 IN THE REGION AND WITHIN THE NOW-NEXT-LATER CLASSIFICATION*

SOUTHEAST REGION

SOUTHEAST REGION LONG-TERM OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS BY TOP OPENINGS

OCCUPATION TITLE		2022 Estimated Employment	2032 Projected Employment	Annual Growth Openings	Annual Exits	Annual Transfers	Annual Total Openings	Median Wages
NOW OCCUPATIONS								
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	★	8,901	9,927	103	753	628	**1,484**	$29,067
Cashiers	★	5,061	4,880	-18	478	482	**942**	$27,161
Stockers and Order Fillers		3,367	3,497	13	214	336	**563**	$33,547
Retail Salespersons	★	3,040	3,008	-3	198	239	**434**	$30,419
Waiters and Waitresses		2,041	2,003	-4	174	244	**414**	$29,673
NEXT OCCUPATIONS								
Nursing Assistants	★	2,519	2,685	17	165	204	**386**	$34,569
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	★	3,692	3,622	-7	166	214	**373**	$48,279
Cooks, Restaurant		1,663	1,608	-6	112	133	**239**	$29,494
Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators		1,648	1,674	3	70	105	**178**	$36,581
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	★	1,824	1,914	9	82	85	**176**	$41,866
LATER OCCUPATIONS								
General and Operations Managers	★	4,269	4,342	7	107	231	**345**	$63,344
Registered Nurses	★	4,137	4,493	36	143	89	**268**	$75,253
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education		1,673	1,626	-5	55	54	**104**	$46,577
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education		1,701	1,652	-5	49	54	**98**	$58,269
Substitute Teachers, Short-Term		718	696	-2	44	40	**82**	$32,442

SOURCE: MERIC OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS, 2022-2032   ★ DENOTES OCCUPATIONS IN THE TOP TEN ONLINE JOB ADS FOR MAY 2023- APRIL 2024 IN THE REGION AND WITHIN THE NOW-NEXT-LATER CLASSIFICATION

ONLINE JOB POSTINGS

Job postings are an indicator of demand and opportunities in an area and can assist individuals seeking job opportunities in current in-demand occupations. According to information based on online job posting data collected and aggregated from May 1, 2023 to April 30, 2024 by Lightcast™ for the Southeast Region, jobs like *Registered Nurses; Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses;* and *Retail Salespersons* had a high number of job postings in the region.

OCCUPATION TITLE	ONLINE JOB POSTINGS
NOW OCCUPATIONS	
Retail Salespersons	470
Home Health & Personal Care Aides	390
Customer Service Representatives	190
Laborers & Freight, Stock, & Material Movers, Hand	170
Cashiers	150
NEXT OCCUPATIONS	
Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	530
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	460
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	420
Nursing Assistants	230
Food Service Managers	230
LATER OCCUPATIONS	
Registered Nurses	1,400
Physical Therapists	210
General & Operations Managers	190
Occupational Therapists	150
Speech-Language Pathologists	130

SOURCE: LIGHTCAST™, ONLINE JOB ADS FROM MAY 1, 2023 - APRIL 30, 2024